

BOOK REVIEWS

Nature rambles—spring¹

Those members of the Torrey Botanical Club who have had the good fortune to listen to the lectures of Professor Medsger, who is, by the way, a member of the club of long standing, have doubtless been impressed by the peculiarly unique way in which he weaves in little interesting bits of information and deductions he has made from his observations of natural objects—plants, birds, trees, insects, stones, etc. For more than twenty-five years he has taught natural history in high school and college and for some fifteen years he was a nature leader in summer camps. This book, which was written at the request of the publishers, has, throughout, the same quality, and, moreover, is written in plain, straightforward language, easily understood by boys and girls. It is also pervaded throughout by an enthusiasm for and a poetic appreciation of the out-of-doors which is irresistible and contagious.

Looking it over brought back the days of my boyhood. What a joy it would have been to have owned such book then! But it is written also, as Dr. Fisher says in the foreword, "for adults who have not stopped learning." Professor Medsger writes me that three other volumes are to follow—one for each season, and we shall look forward to the pleasure of seeing them.

ARTHUR H. GRAVES

A field key to the genera of wild and cultivated trees²

Miss Barrett, another well known member of the club, and formerly a teacher at the State Normal School and the State Teachers' College at Montclair, New Jersey, has prepared this excellent key for those who wish to identify trees when they are in leaf. A page of drawings in explanation of the most important characters is added, as well as several pages of explanation of

¹ Medsger, Oliver Perry. *Nature rambles—spring*. An introduction to country lore. With foreword by Clyde Fisher. x+160 pp. 16 col. pl., 15 half-tone pl., and 40 text ill. Frederick Warne & Co: New York and London, 1931. Price, \$2.00.

² Barrett, Mary Franklin. *A field key to the genera of the wild and cultivated hardy trees of the Northeastern States and Canada.*, 40 pp. Published by the author: 64 Park Avenue, Bloomfield, N. J. 1931. Price, \$.35.

terms used, and an index. We say it is an excellent key, because we have tried it for several genera, and have found that it "works." An especially valuable feature is the inclusion of cultivated genera such as *Buxus*, *Torreya*, *Cercidiphyllum*, *Shepherdia*, *Acanthopanax*, *Eucommia*, *Gordonia*, *Buddleia*, *Corylopsis*, *Maackia*, *Koelreuteria*, and many others, which to a beginner are insurmountable stumbling blocks, since they are not included in most keys; and yet they do occur, some of them very commonly, in the parks and estates of the Northeast.

ARTHUR H. GRAVES

FIELD TRIPS OF THE CLUB

FIELD TRIP OF SUNDAY, MAY 17

Our party of ten left the shores of Greenwood Lake at Lakeside, which lies at 620 feet elevation, the objective being Surprise Lake nestling above, to the westward, in a steep-sided depression, slightly over 1300 feet above sea level. Ascending the trail up the mountainside by easy stages, we paused halfway at the never-failing spring presided over by the three tupelos (*Nyssa sylvatica*) and then headed for Lookout Rock. An ideal day gave fine visibility from this vantage point, and the extended panorama of rolling hills in all directions was indeed an inspiring sight. It was possible to discern several of the Catskill mountains far to the north, and in this way to orient the members of our group, most of whom were visiting the region for the first time.

The forest rang with bird songs, the peak of the spring migration having been reached by this date. Many of the birds are, however, permanent residents of the region, notably the golden-winged warbler and the pileated woodpecker. Along the trail and in bloom were such members of the spring flower troupe as one commonly encounters over these hills—viz:—*Pedicularis canadensis*, *Zizia aurea*, *Polygala paucifolia*, *Panax trifolium*, *Arisaema triphyllum*, *Aralia nudicaulis*, *Aquilegia canadensis*, *Trientalis americana*, *Smilacina racemosa*, and also the much rarer *Smilacina stellata*.

It is gratifying to note the steady increase of *Cypripedium acaule* over the Bearfort, although but a few plants were actu-